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REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed June 20, 2003, claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 12, 13, and 16 were objected to because of informalities; claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Krichevar. The foregoing objections and rejections are respectfully traversed.

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 16, and 19 have been amended. Claims 1-20 are pending and under consideration.

Claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 12, 13, and 16 are amended, taking the Examiner's comments into consideration. Withdrawal of the objections to the foregoing claims for informalities is respectfully requested.

Krichever discusses a bar code reader. As shown in Figure 1 and discussed in cols. 4-6 of Krichever, the Krichever apparatus includes a bar code reader an array 12 of M x N charge-coupled devices that may be 256 x 256 (that is, square).

However, Krichever does not appear to discuss or suggest detecting a maximum number of neighboring or contiguous blocks to determine a two-dimensional code, as in the present invention.

More particularly, Krichever discusses in col. 9 at line 3 through col. 10 at line 2, detecting the existence of a bar code in serial electrical signals by the use of a raster scan detecting a bar code one row at a time (in rectilinear fashion), detecting numbers of transitions between black and white pixels, and/or detecting the ratio of black to white pixels per unit length.

Krichever, however, does not discuss detecting a region having the maximum number of contiguous blocks as the two-dimensional code region. This is disclosed in Figure 1 and in paragraph [0056] on page 10 of the present application.

Each of independent claims 1, 10, and 19 are amended to clarify the foregoing features of the present invention. More particularly, each of claims 1, 10, and 19 of the present application recites (using the recitation of claim 1 as an example) "detecting a region comprising the maximum number of neighboring and contiguous blocks among said detected blocks".

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejections is respectfully requested.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

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Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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